

If your lodge would like to do a community service project that assists a member or widow, here are how-to tips, words and suggestions from Masonic Outreach Services.

How to identify members and widows with needs

- **Meetings** — Announce at stated meetings, widows' dinners, sweetheart luncheons, family nights, etc. to identify those who are in need.
- **Charity Committee** — Since this committee is aware of lodge member needs, consult with this committee to determine current needs of members and widows.
- **Trestleboard** — Place an announcement in your Trestleboard and provide a contact name and number for members or widows to call if they would like to be a recipient of the project efforts.
- **Contact members and widows** — Call members and widows you don't see regularly to ask see how they are doing. Share the lodge's plans to do projects and see if they would be interested.

Meet with member or widow that needs assistance

To understand the need, a home visit to the member or widow is best. A phone conversation may be sufficient if the need is minor and does not require the lodge to observe the need before-hand.

Schedule a home visit and bring another member or lady with you. Be friendly and open to what the member/widow might be asking help for at their home. Remember everyone's home looks different and people have different lifestyles, so keep an open mind and a smile on your face.

Use the home visit project form to record what is being asked and what is observed. Let the member know that they may not have to pay any costs and the volunteers will bring needed items. If the member/widow can't pay for the costs or materials, then let them know that this may be fine and that you will talk with the lodge master.

Charity Committee review

The Charity Committee will review the Home Visit Project Checklists to assess the collective needs. Prioritization will be based on urgency, time, and feasibility.

Organizing the project

- **Share information** — Tell your members about the project(s) that have been selected and what is needed to make these projects happen.
- **Sign-up sheet** — Post a sign-up sheet or something similar to collect the names, contact numbers, and talents/skills of members and spouses who will volunteer.
- **Youth orders** — Contact youth order leaders to discuss how they can participate.
- **Spread the word** — Tell other lodges and inspectors within the district to spark greater involvement. More involvement could lead to greater accomplishments.
- **Project Management Sheet** — Use this tool to streamline the project.
- **Communicate with member or widow** — Communicate thoroughly with the member or widow about the work that will be done so that they know what to expect. Their involvement in the planning process will help make them feel more comfortable about the help that they are receiving. Their full agreement is important. Involve their family members as well.

Suggested phone conversation

“Good morning/afternoon, this is Brother XXXXXXXX from XXXXX Lodge calling. I am the (Master/Secretary/Warden) and I wanted to introduce myself and to see how you are doing. I am personally calling all of our brothers and widows/sweethearts that we haven’t seen at lodge for some time.”

“I also want to let you know that the lodge will be helping members and widows with small home repairs, yard clean-up, and other small projects over the next few months. Do you have any repairs, yard work, or small projects that the lodge and youth orders can help you with? Are you interested in receiving our help? You will be helping the lodge fulfill our obligation and you will be helping our youth earn their service hours.”

If the member/widow isn’t interested:

Thank them for their time and let them know the lodge is there for them if they ever need anything. Provide your name and telephone number.

If member/widow is interested:

Ask the following questions:

“What kind of help do you need around the house?”

Do you have any more projects or things you would like done?”

How long have you needed these repairs?”

Do you feel unsafe because of the repairs needed?”

I am glad that you shared this with me today, so we can see how we can help you take care of these tasks and repairs. When may I visit so I can take a look what is needed? I will bring another lodge brother and/or my wife (It can help to have a lady present when contacting widows.) Is that ok? Once I see what type of projects you need help with then I can share the information with the lodge master. Do you have any questions? Would you like to have a family member present during the visit?”

Use this home visit form to make notes and ask questions. Let the member or widow know that they may not have to pay any costs and the volunteers will bring needed items. If the member/widow can't pay for the costs or materials, then let them know that this may be fine and that you will talk with the master.

Lodge: _____ Date: _____

Lodge officer completing recommendation form: _____

Lodge officer phone # _____

Mason's name: _____ Age: _____

Wife/Widow's name: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Who lives in home with Mason, wife, or widow? _____

How did the Mason, wife or widow learn about this assistance? _____

Describe the need: _____

Is the need urgent? What is the deadline? _____

Is the member, wife or widow able to contribute towards this effort? If so, how? _____

Are there family members or other support that would be able to lend a hand? Who and what would be their contribution?
(Request names and contact numbers)

Resources needed: _____

General observations/comments: _____

Mason signature: _____ Date: _____

Wife/widow signature: _____ Date: _____

Ending the Visit:

Thank the member/widow for allowing you to visit and for participate in the lodge's service project. Tell him/her when you will get back to them with a date. Encourage them to call you if they have any more questions or anything they want to share.

Date: _____ Project: _____ Project Purpose: _____

Lodge: _____ Project Lead and Contact Information: _____

Mason/wife/widow name: _____

Contact information: _____ Location: _____

Materials Needed	Person responsible	Cost

Volunteer name	Contact information	Assigned task	Time

Member/widow feedback and comments: _____

Date work completed: _____ Start time: _____ Finish time: _____ No. of volunteers: _____ Total volunteer hours: _____